1	2
Salem	18451
Thiruvallur	3232
Tiruchengode	18433
Tirunelveli	8492
Thiruvarur	1105
Trichy	5578
Vellore	19188
Virudunagar	17590
TOTAL:	289023

(e) and (f) All the handloom weavers are entitled to be covered under Health Insurance Scheme and Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana on payment of his/her share of premium and those weavers in respect of whom the premium has been paid to the Insurance Company namely Life Insurance Corporation of India and ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company have been covered under the Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana and Health Insurance Scheme.

Loan waiver to weavers

†2297. SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the weavers are compelled to commit suicide on account of being under the burden of debt;

(b) whether Government has taken any steps to waive off the debt of weavers on the lines of farmers;

(c) whether Government has made any estimate to determine the balance of loans of banks and electricity etc. against weavers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when these loans of weavers would be waived off?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir. Some of the States have reported about the suicides of handloom weavers due to poverty, family disturbances, financial and other domestic problems and the debt burden may also be one of the reasons.

(b) to (d) The Ministry has constituted a High Level Committee headed by MD, NABARD to look into the problems of high cost of working capital and choking of credit lines in the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

handloom sector. The financial package for Handloom Sector worth Rs. 1945.77 crore for phase I has been sent to Ministry of Finance for their approval. This financial package to handloom sector shall provide (i) loans to handloom sector at lower rate of interest of 7% (ii) Waiver of overdue loans and interest of Weavers/PWCSs/Apex Societies as on 31.03.2007.

Bio-metric survey of handloom weavers

†2298. SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted a bio-metric survey of handloom weavers through the office of Development Commissioner, Handloom and it also proposes to issue identity cards to the weavers after the survey;

(b) if so, by when these identity cards would be provided to the weavers; and

(c) by when a direct grant under handloom schemes through the accounts of CBS bank would be made to weavers after the bio-metric survey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) No, Sir, However, the work of 3rd National Handloom Census and issue of photo identity cards to the eligible Handloom Weavers and allied workers is being carried out for the present. The contract has been awarded to the National Council of Allied Economic Research (NCAER) on 19th March, 2008. It will also issue Photo Identity Cards to all the eligible handloom weavers enumerated during the Census operations, once census work is completed. The work is in progress.

(c) Not applicable as no biometric survey is being conducted.

Converting handlooms into powerlooms in Tamil Nadu

2299. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of handlooms in the State of Tamil Nadu, district-wise;

(b) whether the Union Government proposes to take any steps to convert handlooms into powerlooms;

(c) if so, the details and time-frame fixed for the same; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As per joint Census of Handlooms and Powerloom Report 1995-96, there are 4,13,174 handlooms in the States of Tamil Nadu. District-wise details of Handlooms are maintained by the State Government.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.